

CLAIMS

I claim:

- 5           1. A method for enabling access of a plurality of  
data sources by a single access operation wherein each  
data source in said plurality of data sources requires a  
separate driver to access the data source so that there  
is a plurality of separate drivers, said method  
10 comprising:  
            using an application programming interface  
            (API) for each driver in said plurality of separate  
drivers, wherein said API is substantially identical  
for each of said drivers in said plurality of  
15 separate drivers; and  
            receiving said single access operation by a  
merging driver wherein in response to said single  
access operation, said merging driver accesses each  
driver in said plurality of separate drivers through  
20 said API.
2. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:  
            receiving from a user a selection of each data  
source to be included in said plurality of data  
25 sources.
3. The method of Claim 2 wherein one data source in  
said plurality of data sources is a merging data source.
- 30           4. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:  
            obtaining an ordered result in response to said  
single access operation.
5. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:  
35           accessing said merging driver through said API.

6. A computer program product comprising computer program code for enabling access of a plurality of data sources by a single access operation wherein each data source in said plurality of data sources requires a  
5 separate driver to access the data source so that there is a plurality of separate drivers, said method comprising:

using an application programming interface (API) for each driver in said plurality of separate  
10 drivers, wherein said API is substantially identical for each of said drivers in said plurality of separate drivers; and

receiving said single access by a merging driver wherein in response to said single access  
15 operation, said merging driver accesses said plurality of separate drivers through said API.

7. The computer program product of Claim 6 wherein said method further comprises:

20 receiving from a user a selection of each data source to be included in said plurality of data sources.

8. The computer program product of Claim 7 wherein  
25 one data source in said plurality of data sources is a merging data source.

9. The computer program product of Claim 6 wherein said method further comprises:

30 obtaining an ordered result in response to said single access operation.

10. The computer program product of Claim 6 wherein said method further comprises:

35 accessing said merging driver through said API.

11. A system comprising:

a plurality of data sources;

a driver for each data source in said plurality  
of data sources thereby forming a plurality of  
drivers wherein each driver has a substantially  
identical driver application programming interface;  
and

a merging driver coupled to each driver in said  
plurality of drivers through said driver application  
programming interface.

12. The system of Claim 11 wherein one data source  
in said plurality of data sources is a merging data  
source.

13. A system comprising:

a processor; and

a memory coupled to said processor, and having  
stored therein computer program instructions,  
wherein execution of computer program instructions  
by said processor comprises a method for enabling  
access of a plurality of data sources by a single  
access operation wherein each data source in said  
plurality of data sources requires a separate driver  
to access the data source so that there is a  
plurality of separate drivers, said method  
comprising:

using an application programming interface  
(API) for each driver in said plurality of  
separate drivers, wherein said API is  
substantially identical for each of said  
drivers in said plurality of separate drivers;  
and

receiving said single access operation by  
a merging driver wherein in response to said  
single access operation, said merging driver

accesses each driver in said plurality of  
separate drivers through said API.

14. The system of Claim 13, said method further  
5 comprising:

receiving from a user a selection of each data  
source to be included in said plurality of data  
sources.

10 15. The system of Claim 14 wherein one data source  
in said plurality of data sources is a merging data  
source.

16. The system of Claim 13, said method further  
15 comprising:  
obtaining an ordered result in response to said  
single access operation.

17. The system of Claim 13, said method further  
20 comprising:  
accessing said merging driver through said API.

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